

# Douglas Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization Charter

## I. NAME

- a. The name of the organization shall be the Douglas Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (Douglas Elementary School PTO).
- b. The Douglas Elementary School PTO shall operate in the Town of Douglas, in the County of Worcester, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

## II. PURPOSE

- a. The purpose of the Douglas Elementary School PTO is to support and enhance the education of the children at the Douglas Elementary School and Douglas Preschool by fostering a spirit of cooperation and promoting open communication between families and staff of the school.
- b. The Douglas Elementary School PTO is organized exclusively for educational purposes such as those organizations that qualify as exempt under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- c. The Douglas Elementary School PTO shall not participate in nor fund propaganda, nor otherwise attempt to influence legislation. The Douglas Elementary School PTO shall not participate in, nor intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. At PTO meetings, issues directly related to the educational experience of the children of the Douglas Elementary School, Douglas Preschool and/or the Douglas Massachusetts School District may be discussed, however, the Douglas Elementary School PTO shall not take any official position nor encourage any specific action on the part of its members.
- d. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Charter, the Douglas Elementary School PTO shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this organization.

### III. MEMBERSHIP

- a. Members
  - i. All parents and/or Legal Guardians of current Douglas Elementary School students, Douglas Preschool Students and all Principals and Teachers of the Douglas Elementary School or Douglas Preschool are Regular Members of the Douglas Elementary School PTO.
  - ii. Regular Members have the right to attend and participate in all public meetings and activities of the Douglas Elementary School PTO.
- b. Voting. Every Regular Member in attendance at Douglas Elementary School PTO meetings shall be eligible to vote.
- c. Membership Dues
  - i. The Douglas Elementary School PTO accepts dues from members, but these dues are not mandatory. The dues collected are used for the operation of the organization.
  - ii. The Douglas Elementary School PTO will vote the price of the voluntary dues every year.
  - iii. No eligible persons shall be denied participation in the Douglas Elementary School PTO if dues are not paid.

### IV. MEETINGS

- a. Regular PTO Meetings
  - i. Regular PTO Meetings shall be held approximately once per month, the time to be established by the Co-Chairs and the Principal(s) at the end of each month for the following month and announced 3 days prior to the meeting.
  - ii. There shall be a minimum of 3 Regular PTO Meetings per year.
  - iii. The tentative schedule of the Regular PTO Meetings shall be announced at the beginning of each year.
  - iv. At Regular PTO Meetings, normal business of the Douglas Elementary School PTO shall be conducted.
- b. Special PTO Meetings.
  - i. When voted by the Executive Board or authorized by petition of at least 7 Regular Members, a Special PTO Meeting shall be called.
  - ii. The time, place and purpose of all Special PTO Meetings shall be announced at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

- iii. The only business to be conducted during a Special PTO Meeting shall be directly related to the purpose stated when the meeting was announced.
- c. Executive Board Meetings
  - i. Executive Board Meetings shall be called as needed by the Executive Board to vote on PTO business or take other action that cannot wait until a Regular PTO Meeting.
  - ii. Executive Board Meetings shall be authorized to be conducted via electronic means, with the Secretary keeping a hard-copy record of any votes taken.
  - iii. Only the Officers of the Executive Board shall be eligible to vote at Executive Board Meetings.
  - iv. Regardless of the number of Executive Board Members in attendance or participating at an Executive Board Meeting, the vote of at least three (majority if we add new Board Members) Executive Board Members shall be required to take action on behalf of the Douglas Elementary School PTO.
  - v. Results of Executive Board meetings shall be reported at the next Regular PTO Meeting.
- d. Quorum. A minimum of five (5) Regular Members of the Douglas Elementary School PTO present at a Regular PTO Meeting or Special PTO Meeting shall be designated as a quorum and shall be entitled to take action on behalf of the organization.
- e. Voting. Unless otherwise dictated in this Charter, a simple majority vote of the members present at any meeting shall be required for all action to be taken by the organization.

## V. EXECUTIVE BOARD

- a. Officers
  - i. The Officer Positions of the Douglas Elementary School PTO shall consist of two Co-Chairs, one Secretary, and one Treasurer.
  - ii. The Executive Board of the Douglas Elementary School PTO shall consist solely of the Officer Positions listed above.
  - iii. In the event that there is only one person interested in being a Co-Chairs, the position shall be renamed Chairperson, and the responsibilities shall remain the same. In this case the Executive Board shall consist of three members.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The primary responsibilities of the Co-Chairs shall be:
    - 1. To serve as the principal executive officers of the organization.

2. To supervise, facilitate and direct all of the activities of the organization, subject to the control of the Executive Board and the direction of the membership.
  3. To preside at all meetings of the Executive Board and all meetings of the membership.
- ii. The primary responsibilities of the Secretary shall be:
1. To keep accurate minutes of all formal Douglas Elementary School PTO meetings and distribute them to all Officers and the Principal(s) prior to each meeting.
  2. To prepare the agenda for each formal meeting of the Douglas Elementary School PTO.
  3. To provide the minutes of the previous meeting for approval at each Regular PTO Meeting.
  4. To keep track of and report correspondence received by the Douglas Elementary School or Douglas Preschool such as teacher requests and thank you notes.
- iii. The primary responsibilities of the Treasurer shall be:
1. To be responsible for all Income and Expense for the Douglas Elementary School PTO.
  2. To make disbursements as authorized by the Executive Board and/or membership in accordance with the budget adopted by the membership.
  3. To present a written financial report at each Regular PTO Meeting and General PTO Meeting and at other times as requested by the Executive Board.
  4. To be responsible for filing all required tax and/or financial forms. The Executive Board shall have an opportunity to review and approve these documents before submittal.
- c. Obligations
- i. All Officers of the Executive Board shall have authority to enter into contracts, agreements or obligations for the purchase of materials or services on behalf of the Douglas Elementary School PTO but only within approved activities and budgets.
  - ii. Neither the Executive Board Officers nor any PTO Member shall have the authority to enter into any contracts, agreements or obligations on behalf of Douglas Elementary School, Douglas Preschool or the Douglas Massachusetts School District, nor shall they present themselves as having such authority.

## VI. OTHER PTO POSITIONS

- a. The other PTO positions shall include:
  - i. Enrichment Coordinator
  - ii. Grade Level and Specialist Liaisons
  - iii. Publicity Coordinator
  - iv. Volunteer Coordinator
  - v. Website Coordinator
- b. Other PTO positions shall be a one year term and be on a volunteer basis at the regular September PTO meeting. If no one volunteers for any of the other PTO positions during a year, the position will remain unfilled and the responsibilities will be performed by a member of the Executive Board as appropriate.
- c. Responsibilities
  - i. The primary responsibilities of the Enrichment Coordinator will be:
    1. To coordinate with the Principal and Grade Level Coordinators to select curriculum-based enrichment events for the students
    2. To provide an update of the selected enrichment events at each regular PTO meeting by communicating the request to the co-chairs prior to the meeting
    3. To prepare an announcement for each selected enrichment event and provide to the schools for review and distribution. The announcement should also be provided to the publicity and website coordinators as appropriate
  - ii. The primary responsibilities of the Grade Level and Specialist Liaisons will be:
    1. To maintain ongoing communication with their respective grade level coordinator or with the specialists teachers to determine what the PTO can do to support and enhance the education of their students
    2. To communicate any enrichment requests to the Principal and determine with the Principal whether the PTO membership should be asked to provide the enrichment request.
    3. To provide an update of any Grade Level or Specialist enrichment request at each regular PTO meeting by communicating the request to the co-chairs prior to the meeting

- iii. The primary responsibilities of the Publicity Coordinator will be:
  1. To receive publicity information from the chairperson, coordinator or committee for each PTO activity and get that information into the local newspapers, local cable stations, community bulletin boards as appropriate.
- iv. The primary responsibilities of the Volunteer Coordinator will be:
  1. To create and maintain a list of volunteers for the Elementary PTO events and activities. The volunteer coordinator will create a list of volunteers using the information received from the membership drive and update the list throughout the year.
  2. To receive volunteer requests from the chairperson, coordinator or committee for each PTO activity and coordinate volunteers for those activities.
  3. To communicate with the Douglas High School National Honor Society coordinator for high school student volunteers when appropriate for an event or activity.
- v. The primary responsibilities of the Website Coordinator will be:
  1. To maintain and update the Elementary PTO website with information provided by the executive board, chairpersons, coordinators or committees for each PTO event or activity.
  2. The website for the Elementary PTO shall include postings of at least the following:
    - a. Executive Board, Continuing and Special Committee members
    - b. Membership Form and Information
    - c. Regular PTO and Executive Committee meeting announcements, agendas and meeting minutes
    - d. Any PTO event and activity information provided by the executive board, coordinators or committees.

## VII. ELECTIONS.

- a. Procedure.
  - i. The election of officers shall take place as the last Agenda Item during the next-to-last Regular PTO Meeting. This is normally in May.
  - ii. All members of the organization shall be eligible to participate in an election. Only those members in attendance shall be allowed to vote.

- iii. Nominations may be made from the eligible members of the organization in attendance, and must be seconded and must be accepted by the candidate.
  - iv. The election for each office, if non-contested, shall be by voice vote. Any contested election shall be by written ballot.
- b. Terms of Office.
- i. The term of each office shall be two years.
  - ii. The officers who are elected at the next-to-last Regular PTO meeting of the year shall be sworn in to office at the conclusion of the Regular PTO meeting of that year. This is typically scheduled at the end of May.
  - iii. The new board shall officially assume control at the last Regular PTO Meeting of the year. This is normally in June.
  - iv. The newly elected Treasurer will not assume bookkeeping responsibilities from the outgoing Treasurer until taxes have been filed for the current fiscal year.
  - v. The timing of the election, swearing-in and new board control may be adjusted slightly due to any scheduling quirks at the end of the year.
  - vi. A person shall serve in any office for a maximum of two consecutive terms. Said person shall immediately be eligible to serve in a different office.
  - vii. A person who has served in an office for two consecutive terms shall be ineligible to serve in that office for a period of one year.
- c. Eligibility - Eligibility for serving as an Officer of the Executive Board shall be limited to those Regular Members who are parents or legal guardians of students attending Douglas Elementary School and Douglas Preschool.
- d. Selection
- i. A majority of the votes cast by the voting members shall be necessary for election.
  - ii. Should no person receive a majority of the votes cast, a run-off between the two (2) persons who received the largest number of votes shall immediately be held.
- e. Termination - An elected officer may be terminated prior to the end of the term by a majority vote of the Executive Board.
- f. Vacancies

- i. The Executive Board shall temporarily fill any vacancy in office because of death, resignation, inability to serve, termination or for any other reason.
- ii. An election to fill the unexpired term portion of the term vacancy shall be held at the next Regular PTO Meeting or Special PTO Meeting consistent with the procedures established herein.
- iii. For purposes of eligibility, a person who is filling a vacancy shall be considered to have served the full term only if more than half of the term of office remains at the time they fill the position.

## VIII. COMMITTEES

### a. Definitions

- i. Continuing Committee. Continuing Committees and their purpose shall be established by a vote of the PTO and remain in force until retired by a vote of the PTO. Continuing Committees shall be staffed as needed throughout the year, however, they provide continuity from year to year for a specific purpose and/or event. The specific composition of each Continuing Committee varies as needed.
- ii. Special Committee. Special Committees shall be established by a vote of the Executive Board or by the Co-Chairs for a special specific purpose, goal or timeframe. Once the purpose, goal or timeframe of the Special Committee is met, it shall be automatically disbanded.

### b. Continuing Committees

- i. The PTO Membership may establish by a simple majority vote such Continuing Committees, as it deems necessary and advisable.
- ii. The Executive Board shall appoint the Chairpersons of all Continuing Committees, who shall serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Board. Only Regular Members may serve as Chairpersons.
- iii. The Chairperson of each committee shall recruit the members for their committee as needed.
- iv. Any person that is not a Regular Member that the Chairperson desires to be on the committee shall be approved by the Executive Board. If that person's function on the committee requires contact with students of the school, or to be on school grounds during any time when students may reasonably be expected to be present, the Principal(s) must also give approval before that person shall serve on the committee.
- v. The length of service for a Chairperson is normally one year, but may vary as determined by the Executive Board.



- vi. For committees that have specific events associated with them, the period of service will typically be from 11 months prior to 1 month after the date of that event.
  - vii. The Executive Board will determine and/or review the operating budget submitted by Chairpersons for each Continuing Committee every 12 months or more often as needed or specified. Chairpersons may purchase items or services within the maximum amount specified for budget items as specified, tracking all expenses and submitting receipts for reimbursements.
  - viii. The Executive Board shall review all financial transactions and obligations that will exceed the approved budget for the committee. The committee Chairperson shall not execute any financial transaction or obligation that exceeds the approved budget without the approval of the Executive Board.
  - ix. If monies are required in advance, the Chairperson may submit a request to the Treasurer describing details of the purchase, submit a funds request, and use that money in the nature described. The Chairperson shall be responsible for obtaining a final receipt, invoice or similar of the monies spent, and returning all unspent money to the Treasurer.
  - x. The Chairperson, Principal(s) and Superintendent of Schools shall approve all school flyers and public information notices prior to distribution of the material.
  - xi. The Chairperson shall ensure that copies of all written requests for donations from individuals, groups or businesses are submitted to the Treasurer.
  - xii. The Chairperson shall regularly report the plans and activities of the committee to the Executive Board, and to the PTO Membership at Regular PTO Meetings.
  - xiii. At the request of the Executive Board, the Chairperson shall prepare a final written summary of all activities, financials and details of the activities after completion of all outstanding items.
- c. Special Committees
- i. The Co-Chairs and/or the Executive Board may create Special Committees as needed and deemed appropriate
  - ii. Special Committees shall be created for a specific time and/or task and shall cease to exist when that time or task has been completed.
- d. Obligations
- i. The Executive Board may delegate authority to enter into contracts or agreements for the purchase of materials or services on behalf of the organization to the Chairperson of a committee and/or to any member of the committee.

- ii. Any person to whom this authority is delegated, shall only be authorized to exercise this authority within the stated purpose of the committee and only within the budget of the committee.

## IX. FINANCES

### a. Financial Prohibitions

- i. As a volunteer organization, the Douglas Elementary School PTO shall not pay or provide any remuneration to the Officers of the Executive Board, Committee Chairpersons, Committee Members or any other member of the organization for their volunteer service to the organization.
- ii. There shall be no commingling of Douglas Elementary School PTO funds with the personal, professional, or business accounts of any individuals, groups or businesses. This shall include a prohibition against providing Douglas Elementary School PTO funds as a loan to anyone for any purpose.

### b. Financial Institution

- i. The financial institution used by the Douglas Elementary School PTO shall be a Federal or State Chartered Bank or Credit Union approved by the Board.
- ii. The authorized signatures of the account shall be a Co-Chairs and the Treasurer. Either one of these individuals, and only these individuals, are authorized to withdraw funds, write checks, drafts, or other expenditures for the payment of money on behalf of the organization.
- iii. The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring all monies of the Douglas Elementary School PTO are deposited in a timely manner into the account.

### c. Annual Budget

- i. The Fiscal Year shall run from July 1 of one calendar year through June 30 of the next.
- ii. At the last scheduled Regular PTO meeting of the year, the Treasurer shall prepare and present a proposed budget for the following year. At a minimum, the Budget shall include:
  - 1. Current Balance as of the date of the meeting
  - 2. Expected and reasonable expenditures through the remainder of the fiscal year.
  - 3. Reasonable estimates for fundraising activities during the first four months of the new fiscal year. If funds allow, the Treasurer may assume zero fundraising during this period for planning purposes.

4. A listing of recommended discretionary expenditures proposed for the next fiscal year.
5. The proposed budget must be in balance, meaning the Projected Balance is nonnegative.
6. The PTO may discuss the proposed budget as needed. Changes to the proposed budget may be made as determined by the discussion.
7. The Co-Chairs shall not allow a vote on a proposed Budget that is not in balance.
8. Approval of the budget is by majority vote. The PTO must vote to approve a Budget at this meeting.

d. Changing the Approved Budget

- i. The Treasurer shall keep track of actual expenditures vs. budget items.
- ii. The Treasurer shall not reimburse an expense that exceeds the Approved Budget for that budget item within \$75.00.
- iii. A proposal to modify the Approved Budget may be made by any PTO member (including the Treasurer) at any scheduled Regular PTO Meeting. If the majority of the eligible PTO membership votes to accept the proposed change, the Treasurer will update the Approved Budget prior to the next report.
- iv. By majority vote, the Executive Board may, at any time, vote to modify the Approved Budget. This vote shall be included in the Secretary's Report at the next Regular PTO Meeting.

e. Reporting

- i. The Treasurer shall keep track of all actual deposits and expenditures.
- ii. At every Regular PTO Meeting, the Treasurer shall provide a written financial report that the Secretary keeps with the minutes of the meeting. At a minimum, the report shall contain:
  1. The Closing Balance from the previous Treasurers Report,
  2. All income received and deposited since the previous Treasurers Report, organized by budget item.
  3. All expenditures made since the previous Treasurers Report, organized by budget item.
  4. The current Closing Balance
  5. The remaining balance of all budget items

- iii. At Regular PTO Meetings each year, the Treasurer shall provide an updated estimate of the end-of-year balance. The estimated end-of-year balance is the current Closing Balance plus the reasonable estimated income from all remaining fundraisers minus all estimated expenditures.
  - iv. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the timely completion and submittal of any other financial or tax records, reports or forms. The taxes will be prepared by both the outgoing Treasurer and the newly elected Treasurer to ensure continuity of record keeping. The Executive Board shall review and vote to approve these items prior to submittal.
- f. Oversight. The Co-Chairs are responsible for organizing an independent review of the Douglas Elementary School PTO finances at least once a year. The Co-Chairs shall appoint a qualified person or persons to conduct and provide written documentation of the review. The Recording Secretary shall keep a copy of this documentation.
- g. Dissolution
- i. Should the Douglas Elementary School PTO be dissolved for any reason, the following shall dictate how remaining assets shall be disbursed.
  - ii. The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring all outstanding debts are paid off and adequate time to clear has passed.
  - iii. The Treasurer shall present an inventory of all remaining assets to the Executive Board.
  - iv. The Executive Board shall determine how to distribute these assets for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of, shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Douglas Elementary School PTO is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as a court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

## X. AMENDMENTS.

- a. Definition. An Amendment is any change, addition or subtraction to the wording of any section or subsection of this Charter
- b. Procedure
  - i. Any PTO Member may submit a proposed Amendment to this Charter. This submittal shall be in writing and submitted to the Co-Chairs at least 48 hours prior to a scheduled Regular PTO Meeting.

- ii. The Co-Chairs shall be required to bring the proposed Amendment forward at the next scheduled Regular PTO meeting. At this meeting a full reading of the proposed Amendment shall occur. Discussion of the proposed Amendment is encouraged at this first reading, however no vote will be taken.
  - iii. At the discretion of the Co-Chairs, a second reading of the proposed Amendment and a vote shall be taken either at the next scheduled Regular PTO Meeting or a Special PTO Meeting. If the vote is to occur at a Special PTO Meeting, it shall be scheduled and widely publicized in accordance with the provisions of Section IV of this Charter.
  - iv. At the second meeting, a full reading and discussion of the proposed Amendment shall occur. This discussion is specifically to include a comment by an appointed Executive Board member (typically the Treasurer) on how any outside organizations with review authority over the Charter may view the proposed Amendment. When the Co-Chairs decide discussion has completed, a vote shall be taken immediately.
  - v. The vote will be taken by show of hands. All Regular Members in attendance, including the Executive Board may vote. The proposed Amendment will be passed and accepted if at least 2/3 of those eligible and present vote for the Amendment.
- c. Approved Amendment
- i. If the proposed Amendment passes, the Secretary shall ensure the change is incorporated into the Charter at the earliest opportunity.
  - ii. The Treasurer shall send approved copies of the new Charter to outside organizations for review as needed, within 30 days of the vote.
- d. Defeated Amendment
- i. If the proposed Amendment is defeated, it or any similar proposed Amendment shall be ineligible to be brought to a Regular PTO meeting for at least one year from the date of the defeating vote.
  - ii. The definition of a similar proposed Amendment shall be at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.
- e. Exemption to the Amendment Procedure. As a special exemption to the procedure specified elsewhere in this Section, if the proposed Amendment is brought to the Co-Chairs prior to the next-to-last or last scheduled Regular PTO meeting of the year, the Co-Chairs may, at their own discretion, table the proposed Amendment until the first scheduled Regular PTO meeting of the next year. This is intended to ensure that both readings and the vote occur within a reasonably short period of time, and within the same year.